

With Love and Fury

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Summary: SPOILERS FOR HTTYD 2. Missing scene set just after "Stoick's Ship." Full (spoilery) summary inside. Astrid lost someone too, that day. Oneshot, complete.

With Love and Fury

**\*\*WARNING: SPOILERS AHEAD! \*\*\*\*DO NOT READ\*\*\*\* if you haven't seen HTTYD 2 yet! Turn back now!\*\***

Title: With Love and Fury

Length: Oneshot

Characters: Astrid, Hiccup, Stoick (mentioned)

Summary: Astrid lost more than a Chief that day. She lost a mentor, a leader, and a future father-in-law.

\* \* \*

><p>The plan was crazy, but Hiccup's plans always were, and Astrid took it in stride. She had no doubt that they would pull it offâ€”they had to. The stakes were too high, and failure had already proved too costly. They simply could not lose this time.<p>

Everyone, even Eret, seemed to feel the same way. The second Hiccup had finished his outlining his plan they all jumped into actionâ€”no questions, not even a nervous comment from Fishlegs or arguments from the twinsâ€”and began to head back towards the icy, broken mountain behind them.

Astrid lingered on the shore, watching the burning ship, now a distant glow on the horizon. There was no more time for grief, not yet, but she could not leave without at least paying her respects to

the man was her Chief, and would, someday, have been her father-in-law.

Stoick had been Chief for as long as she could remember, and had intimidated her for just as long. He was so big, so strong, it was impossible not to feel small in his presenceâ€"safe and protected, but small. It was only after the war ended that she had come to see a different side of him. For the first time she saw why Stoick was the Chief, and why everyone in the village accepted his leadership without question. She saw the warmth he had often hidden beneath gruff words and stern looks, the compassion and dedication that drove him to work so hard for his people.

Even more than that, she sawâ€"so clearly she couldn't believe anyone had missed it beforeâ€"the love he had for Hiccup. Stoick, she came to realize, was a man of boundless devotion. To his people, yes, but to his son most of all. He had loved Hiccup with all the might and ferocity of a dragon, and over the past five years she had watched him encourage, protect, push, fight with, and comfort his son, slowly but surely repairing the bond that had almost been severed.

It had been surprising, and not a little bit terrifying, when Stoick's newfound interest in Hiccup's life expanded to include an interest in her. Somehow she won his approval before she even realized she ought to try for it, and she quickly came to welcome his almost paternal advice on her axe-work, his thanks for talking sense into his son or keeping him out of harm's way (as best she could). They had bonded over their shared care for Hiccup, whose ideas and escapades kept both of them alternately impressed and alarmed.

She had discovered that Stoick the Vast was, at heart, a father first and a Chief second. And she knew how he had become so great, so brave, so selflessâ€"it was his love for Hiccup. Typical of Hiccup not to realize something so obvious, but she would tell him so later, once they were safely home with their dragons.

The ship was flickering now, sinking into the icy water. Astrid stood, blinking back tears as she watched her Chief's final vessel slowly disappear.

Thank you. She couldn't speak the words out loud. Thank you for saving Hiccup. She would always, always be grateful for that, even though she grieved the cost. Thank you for your guidance, your strength, your care for all of us. Thank you forâ€"for your blessing. She wished she had told him how much it meant to her.

Nothing remained now but smoke and a fading orange glow on the horizon. Astrid straightened, wiping her eyes, and found Hiccup standing nearby. He was silent, facing the sea, but he glanced at her with a smile that made her heart ache, and held out his hand.

She joined him, lacing her fingers through his, and felt him stand a little taller. He released a long breath.

"Ready?" she said. It wasn't really a question. She could see it, an echo of his father's fierceness and strength in his eyes, mixed with that special brand of fearless tenacity that only Hiccup possessed. He would get through thisâ€"she would make sure of it, for Stoick's sake as well as her own.

He squeezed her hand, and his smile did not look so shattered this time. "Ready."

End  
file.